NOTES ON *PARADISEIDAE*.

By THE HON. WALTER ROTHSCHILD.

1. On the Genus Manucodia.

In the series of *M. atra* now in the Tring Museum I was always struck with the great variation exhibited both in size and colour. The green, blue, and purple reflections vary in extent, and also in their respective positions; in fact, of two Waigeu specimens, one is entirely washed with metallic green, the other entirely with purple. These variations in size and colour do not, however, appear to be local, and therefore have no subspecific value, and are not constant enough to be of specific value.

My material consists of the following specimens: 6 from the Aru Islands, 6 from Waigeu, 2 from Yule Island, 1 from Mansinam, 1 from Batanta, 4 from Dorey, 3 from Takar, 1 from Kapaur, 2 from British New Guinea, and 2 from German New Guinea.

M. chalybata occurs all over New Guinea, except on the shores of Geelvink Bay, where it is replaced by *M. jobiensis rubiensis* (A. B. Meyer), while typical *M. jobiensis* occur on the islands in that bay.

Dr. A. B. Meyer, of Dresden, first pointed out the supposed differences between eastern and western forms of *M. chalybata*, saying that eastern specimens were less green and more blue in colour. Count Salvadori founded a new species on the eastern forms, calling it *Manucodia orientalis*. While admitting that some of the eastern specimens are more purple-blue, I have western specimens from Kapaur which are more so than most eastern ones, and some eastern specimens are greener or quite as green as the western birds. As to the alleged differences in size and shape of the beak, they are partly sexual and partly individual variation. I therefore am obliged to sink *Manucodia orientalis* as a synonym of *Manucodia chalybata*.

M. jobiensis Salvad. is rare in collections, but I have received it from Jobi Island from Doherty. The differences said to distinguish it from *M. chalybata* by Salvadori are only partly to be found in Jobi specimens. The supposed "green head," which is said to characterise it, is not to be seen in my skins. In fact there are skins of *M. chalybata* which have a more greenish head than *M. jobiensis*. The margins of the feathers of the abdomen cannot be called green, but are less purple than in most *M. chalybata*. What distinguish *M. jobiensis* specifically from *M. chalybata* are the uniformity of the under parts and the less curly structure of the feathers. While in *M. chalybata* the foreneck is distinctly green, sharply separated from the purplish blue breast and abdomen, the throat, breast, and abdomen are steel-blue with a greenish gloss and practically of the same colour in *M. jobiensis*. The feathers of the neck, back, and abdomen are of a different structure and less curly in *M. jobiensis*, so that this species stands in this character between *M. chalybata* and *M. atra*.

Still rarer in collections than *M. jobiensis* is *M. rubiensis* A. B. Meyer. It has been founded on specimens from Rubi, on the southernmost part of Geelvink Bay, and its describer has also specimens from Kafu, on the north coast of New

Guinea. Mr. Doherty has now sent us a *male* and a *female* from Takar, on the north coast of New Guinea, under 136° long., *i.e.* not far from Kafu. This form, as Dr. Meyer truly said, differs considerably from *M. chalybata*, but I find that it closely resembles *M. jobiensis*: in fact it only differs from the latter in a slightly greener gloss all over and in having shorter wings. I therefore think full justice is done to it if it is treated as a subspecies of *M. jobiensis*. In several instances birds from Jobi Island have near allies or reoccur on the northern coast of New Guinea (cf. *Geoffroyus*, *Philemon*, and others). The idea, once started by Dr. Guillemard, that *M. chalybata* is not specifically different from *M. atra* is absurd, and has been opposed by Salvadori and others, and now generally abandoned.

Sharpe has created the generic name *Eucorax* for *Manucodia comrii*. As the structure of the feathers which is peculiar to *M. comrii* is for the most part only well developed in adult *males*, I do not recognise it, besides thinking that, if such slight structural characters of plumage are taken as generic differences, also *M. atra* and *M. chalybata* might be separated generically! I have, on the other hand, recognised *Phonygammus*, as this name has been spelt by its author, as a genus, because all species in both sexes show exactly the same structural differences from all species of *Manucodia*.

2. On some Genera not recognised by me.

I have not, again, allowed generic rank to *Paradisornis*, *Uranornis*, *Trichoparadisea*, *Astrarchia*, *Drepananax*, *Craspedophora*, *Rhipidornis*, as the supposed generic characters of these so-called genera are all based on secondary *male* characters, while the *females* show no structural differences of any importance, and in some cases their specific differences are difficult enough to make out.

Dr. Sharpe told me he intended to separate generically my *Astrapia splendidissima*. For the same reasons as above I cannot agree with him, for, apart from an indication of the white base to the central rectrices so conspicuous in the *male* and its smaller size, it is practically identical with the *female* of *A. nigra*. On the other hand, Dr. Sharpe must be praised for separating the two species into genera, as it proves him to be consistent, which few other zoologists seem to be, in his views on the importance of secondary sexual characters as foundations for genera.

3. Falcinellus striatus (Bodd.).

Being an advocate of the strictest priority, I have been obliged to adopt this name for what is usually called *Epimachus speciosus*. The generic name *Falcinellus* Vieillot has only been rejected on the erroneous impression that *Falcinellus* was preoccupied as a generic term for the Glossy Ibis by Bechstein, but this is clearly not the case, as that author never used the generic term *Falcinellus*, but always called the Ibis "*Tantalus Falcinellus*." The specific name *striatus* must be adopted, as, although Boddaert gave it to the *female*, and named the *male speciosa* on the same page, *striata* comes first, and I quite agree with the *Deutsche Zool. Ges.* that the name first mentioned in any book must stand, irrespective of any other questions.

4. On some Chlamyderae.

In the genus *Chlamydera* (spelt thus by Gould, and not *Chlamydodera*) I have not recognised *C. orientalis* and *C. occipitalis*. My reason for not allowing specific or even subspecific rank to the former was that in the British Museum there are examples of both forms, together with a specimen almost intermediate, all from one and the same locality. *C. occipitalis* has long been considered only a very old *male* of *C. maculata*, although Sharpe again revived it in his monograph, I suppose to bring in Gould's very beautiful original plate.

5. Seleucides ignotus (Forst.).

Count Salvadori, to whom we owe so much of our knowledge of the *Paradiseidae*, and who has specially well worked out the synonymy of the species known at the time of the publication of his great work *Ornitologia della Papuasia e delle Molucce*, has also given an excellent review of the literature on *Seleucides*, without, however, accepting the oldest name for the species. There are, as he admits, several names available for this species, which are based on Valentijn's account of the Birds of Paradise (Vol. III. pp. 306—313), an English translation of which, by Dr. Forster, is found in Forrest's *Voyage to New Guinea*, p. 140 (1779).* There is no doubt whatever that both the *second variety* of Valentijn's "White Bird of Paradise" and his "Unknown Bird of Paradise" refer to *Seleucides*, while the first variety of the "White Bird of Paradise" cannot be recognised, and is probably an albino specimen of some kind, being described as *quite white*. To this White Bird of Paradise Forster gave the name *Paradisea candida*, while not naming the "second variety" of it, which is our present *Seleucides*. Valentijn's No. 6, however, which is also no doubt our *Seleucides*, is named by Forster *Paradisea ignota*. There is no doubt about this fact, and Dr. Sharpe, when saying in his monograph of the *Paradiseidae* that this name had been refused by Salvadori on account of its being founded on an insufficiently clear description, must have misunderstood the Count, who merely did not use it because he had some doubts whether it was used in a binomial manner ("in modo binomino"). Although the phrase "in a binomial sense" has often been used by English ornithologists, it does not convey much of a meaning to me, for I consider a species named if two Latin names are used for it after Linnaeus' tenth edition (1758) by an author who accepted the binomial system. This has been done by Forster, and Count Salvadori and others have generally adopted Forster's names; therefore there is no reason to refuse to accept *Paradisea ignota*. *Paradisea alba* Gmelin (1788) cannot be accepted, as it refers again to the "White Bird of Paradise." The next available name is *Paradisea melanoleuca* Daudin (1800). This is the name given to the *second variety* of the White Bird of Paradise, in opposition to the first quite white variety. There is no reason to refuse *P. melanoleuca*, and Salvadori only refused it because it gave a false idea of the bird! We, however, do not now disregard names for that reason, and it may also be very much questioned whether the name really gives a very false idea, as most specimens in Museums, at least those that are mounted, lose the yellow colour of their plumes, and thus are "black and white." If therefore Forster's name could be avoided—which it *cannot*, as shown above—then Daudin's would have to be used.

* Salvadori only quotes the French translation of this work, which appeared in 1780.

Vieillot's "Manucode à douze filets," although doubtless representing *Seleucides*, is not a good figure either, in fact it cannot be called much better than Valentijn's descriptions, and on it *P. nigricans* Shaw and also Vieillot's *resplendescens* are based. Levaillant's "Nébuleux" is a bad figure, but no doubt also meant to represent a *Seleucides* ♂. Shaw's *P. caillanti* is a small copy of it.

6. On Amblyornis subalaris and inornata.

I have not used Sharpe's genus *Xanthochlamys*, as it was only given to embrace *Amblyornis subalaris* and *A. musgravianus*, under the impression that *A. inornata* had no crest. However, as I have shown in Nov. Zool. IV. pp. 11—13, *A. musgravianus* and *A. macgregoriae* are not separable from *A. inornata*, which acquires an enormous crest when adult. It is, nevertheless, very strange indeed that the crested *males* of *A. inornata* remained unknown for so long.

7. Aeluroedus jobiensis.

I have no longer recognised my *Aeluroedus jobiensis*, as I have come to doubt the locality whence the specimen was said to come, and as I have now seen specimens from Arfak which are almost exactly similar.

8. Parotia sefilata (Penn.).

This name must be used for what is mostly called *Parotia sexpennis*. It has only been abandoned because it was considered barbaric; but, although I do not particularly love such names, they are no longer to be refused, being in accordance with the most modern rules of nomenclature.

9. Diphyllodes.

I am afraid that several ornithologists will not agree with me in uniting *Diphyllodes magnifica*, *seleucides*, *chrysoptera*, *hunsteini*, *jobiensis*, and *xanthoptera* under one specific name. But, after having seen very many specimens, I cannot find that the differences in the colour of the head, wings, or any others, are constant enough to allow any of these forms specific rank, nor localised enough to found any subspecies on them. Future researches may show the fallacy of my theory, but from what we know at present I cannot come to any other conclusion.